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FILED 3:10cr56

JUL 21 2011

Clerk, U. S. District Court
Eastern District of Tennessee
At Knoxville

July 17, 2011

To: Honorable Judge Thomas W. Phillips,

My name is Eric Deshawn Stripling, I am writing you with concerns about my case and a personal view of my past for you in hope of a fair sentence on what I am being held accountable for. One of my first concerns is this conspiracy charge that I am being charged with, to what information I have acquired about this case is that it was a 227 week investigation and it was January 2005 to April 2010. From January 2005 to August 3, 2009 I was incarcerated by Knox County and Tennessee Department of Corrections! To my understanding of a conspiracy is that individuals being charged with conspiracy at the beginning of it sat down with each other and discussed or formulated a plan to conspire. The only one I know on my indictment is my cousin Katrina Clemons, the other people on this case I did not know while, during, or after my incarceration, Katrina was the one who dealt with them, when I was released from prison I saw those individuals one or two times except for Joshua Matthew Mee, Brian Keith Redstar Walker, and Brandi Irene Russell. I witnessed Katrina selling to the other one's and I never took part of any kind of drug selling when I was released from prison. My job when I was first released was a construction job as a laborer, I could not work that due to the only job site's was out of town and my parole officer Joe Kszos would not let me go. So I did miscellaneous work such as yard work, helping people move, washing cars and looking for any full time or part time job to keep from selling drugs. My job search was fruitless although I still did miscellaneous work to support myself saving up money, until November 2009 a week before Thanksgiving I fell ill and went to UT Hospital and was diagnosed with blood clots in both legs and center mass of my chest! The doctor told me to stay off of my feet until told otherwise but the money I had saved up held me over until December of

2009 and a poor decision I made had me selling marijuana from the end of December 2009 until January ~~2010~~ 2010. Even though it was a quarter pound of marijuana I had no business selling it, I did it to help myself to pay bills such as gas back and forth to the doctor, help my mother with her bills, and my Aunt who I was living with when I paroled out. My ~~was~~ miscellaneous jobs was covering me at first, at the end of January 2010 I landed a part time job at Tobacco Etc. on Western Ave. ran by Steve Hamdan, he really could not afford to hire but knowing me from when I was younger and he owned King's Market at the corner of Texas Ave. and StoneWall Ave. he gave me a job to help me out and he knew I did not steal from him at King's Market. I quit selling marijuana instantly and worked at the store part time or when I could if the medicine I was on did not leave me drained! In March of 2010 is when they said I participated in two controlled buys, due to Katrina's steady flow of people buying drugs from her it was talk that someone was plotting to rob her or the people who was coming to buy from her. I was used as a deterrent from who ever was trying, I actually did it to protect her daughter's from that happening and far as any conspiracy I know nothing about it. On March 23, 2010 Katrina asked me could I find her something, she told me she needed one eight ball to go with what she got and instead of saying no I said yeah. The person who I bought my marijuana from also dealt with crack cocaine, within a few more days was my mother's birthday and I needed some extra cash to pay for the food at a little birthday party my family had for her at her home plus a card with \$50.00 in it from me. I could not take this case to trial just to prove it was only one eight ball and then end up with alot of time because of that! I know with every action is a ~~reaction~~ reaction and followed by a consequence either it be good or bad, in all I accept what I am responsible for and do what time that I have to do but what I'm being charged with and the time

I am facing compared to the other's is not fair unless the right charge and time is being applied. My P.S.I guideline range is 262 to 327 months, I am only being held responsible for 19.7 grams of crack cocaine which is a 0 to 240 months and a 551 enhancement was filed on me and my base offense level on my grams is a 22 and the months is from 84 to 105 months. The 851 enhancement is a 8 month to 36 month enhancement and my concern is how does a 0 to 240 month ~~charge~~ is enhanced to a 10 to life with only a 8 month to 36 month enhancement ends up to be a 262 to 327 month ~~guideline~~ guideline range!? I cooperated fully to the best of my knowledge, my lawyer said I would see a difference at sentencing but from what I read says one thing and what I heard from other people with similar cases it seems like I am fixing to be over punished. I am truly sorry after 4 years 7 months of being in prison and getting out and making a very poor decision of getting involved with drugs again which I should have known better. It wasn't too many options I had on making extra money, I figured this one time in an out who would notice and nothing else after this. I was raised in east Knoxville until I was 16 years old by my Great-Great Uncle, his wife and my father. My mother and father were divorced, my brother was 5 years older than me and my mother let my Great-Great Uncle raise us. In my P.S.R it states she abandoned me but only to realize she did it out of respect for my Uncle and my father was an abusive alcoholic. My Uncle and his wife provided three necessary things for me and my brother which were a roof over our heads, food in our stomachs, and love us as if we were actually their own children. My father did all he could until we were 10 and 15 years old, I never had much when I was a child and my Aunt and Uncle was too old to get a job along with their S.S.I checks to do for us, I am not trying to down my father it is just that I am at a

very young age had to learn to do for myself and accept the mental and physical abuse by the hand of my father. I'd rather not go into detail about because it is so hurtful for me! I made good grades in elementary and junior high school, one day I told my father I want to go to college he said no because he does not have that kind of money and me not knowing about financial aid I accepted it and forgot all about college. I kept that conversation between me and him in fear of him getting mad at me. I never had the same things as other kids I went to school with, what ever I hustled up on and saved was enough for me to had got by own in school without getting picked on all the time because I did not have. When I say hustle I mean cut grass, paint brick's on side of houses, and a little side work for my science teacher in junior high Mr. John Roberts at his BBQ restaurant on Magnolia Ave.. I knew about marijuana then cause my father smoked it, it was not a factor to me and I never fooled with it and didn't know about cocaine until I was 18 years old. In High School me and a couple of friend's use to drink beer & liquor but it was to I guess fit in. After my first year at Austin East High School, me, my Uncle & his wife moved to Moore, South Carolina with my father's sister Brenda Nichols (married last name). It was another case I don't fit in and she was to strict on me I thought, while I was down there I was enrolled at Paul M. Dorman High School and worked at a grocery store called Community Cash but I was sent back to Knoxville to live back with my father. He did not have much room in his apartment, so I went to ask my mother can I move in with her and she told me she didn't want me but reluctantly she let me move in with her and my seven year old sister at the time. She got me a job at Hardee's on Western Ave. which I was working and going to school at the same time. Even though I had to had to help

her with the bills an my sister, out of a two week pay check of about \$275.00 I only got \$50.00 out of it each time and when I complained to the manager about it she told my mother she couldn't get my check's no more and told me if I did not give it to here she'd kick me out. From June 1993 to June 1996 I worked two jobs, one at Hardee's on Western Ave. and the other a Krystal's on Western Ave. an due to the fact of me not able to have saved up at least a thousand dollar's and my mother getting all of my money I could not find any other way to have something of my own. So I left her home, quit my jobs because I had no place to lay down after work and had to pay different crack addicts money or drugs to stay at thier places to escape weather conditions. No G.E.D, young and ignorant of my present situation the only way out was for me to adapt to the enviroment that I was in, and I used the mind frame that I had at an early age but this time it would involve drugs. I did not want to, it was getting cold, I had little money and no thought in my head but to be a man an try to make it. I've been providing for myself since I was 10 years old, lucky I wasn't in a drug enviroment then because I probably would not be here now alive! Around 1999 is when I first tried marijuana laced with crack, it was a terrible mistake it's been my downfall ever since. The friend's I use to hang out with was doing it, I felt peer pressure to at least try it due to my so called friends offering, and not wanting me around cause they where using and I wasn't an I stupidly gave it a try. Hooked on it for five years straight an gave it up in March 2004, I was put on community alternative to prison program (C.A.P.P) and I remained clean (not selling) until January of 2005 when I got into a fight with my cousin James Mills because I took his girlfriend from. I bought some marijuana and crack then to relieve some of the stress due to I had a warrant on me and that when I turn myself in I was going to be violated an sent off to prison. (When I got out of prison this last time (only been once) I

tried my hardest not to do wrong, by being out on it being my mother's birthday and not knowing if it might be her last one I share with her because she is sick and so am I. She is a diabetic, has scleriosis of the liver and is losing her sight & that I am not sure I'll make it while she is still alive! I myself have chronic blood clots behind my left knee and center mass of my chest. The medicine I am on puts me on a rollercoaster of feeling bad most days and somewhat good on the rest. Basically I was the only child my mother had that was of helpful use, my sister passed away in March of 2008 and my oldest brother comes around maybe once or twice a year. She needed help far as to go pick up her medicine, help clean the apartment she lives in and help with her bills. Her doctor appointments are at UT Hospital or sometimes in Sweetwater, Tennessee, most of the time she could make it to them if she felt alright but I would insist myself if I could go on break from work at that point in time to take or I would already schedule it with my boss. My relationship with my children is also something that will suffer while I am in here, after a 5 year absence the first time I was incarcerated they seemed to understand action, reaction and consequence better than I expected. I wanted them to be raised similar to my upbringing except for the illegal part about working hard to get what you want, I rewarded them for good grades and best behavior was rewarded to them in itself to where their activities was not limited. In August 2010 one of my friend's asked me to help him pass out food at K.A.R.M, I told him yes and thought it would be a good learning tool for my children to teach them to be thankful for what they have in life. My daughter the oldest one could not go with me cause she had to help her mother watch her infant sister while she participated in a church program. It was me and my 8 year old son who attended, I told him that in any point in time this could be me, you, your sister, your mother or anyone in the family who falls down on their luck and becomes homeless. We must give back when

we have it to give an not expect a pat on the back for it and pray that you will always have the strength to over come any obstrcle in your way. I felt he understood me as well as my daughter when I said it to her, so far I get message's that they are still doing well in school and behaving listening to they mother who I appreciate for raising them well while I am not there. All I wanted to do was give my children a better life then I had growing up, I listened to my ~~and~~ children, never spant or raised my voice at them and that is the reason I stopped selling marijuana and any other kind of drug so when ever they need me I could have been there. When I almost was back to smoking marijuana on sort of a regular basis I sought out NA and AA meetings to help myself out, after a couple of visit's an good news of me fixing to get a job with Knoxville Area Transit (K.A.T) I quit cold turkey. My plan was to work at K.A.T, rent a 3 bedroom house so my kid's will have a room each for when they wanted to spend the night or stay on any sched vacation and sit back an live life. Far as my plans now is to get my barber's liscense while I am in federal custody, go back to Knoxville collect my belongings and move to Moore, South Carolina with my father's sister an cut hair in her son's barbershop. I understand I'll have to do a half way house for six month's, soon as that is up I'll hope I will be able to move to South Carolina without any problem. I have to get away from Knoxville because it is very easy for me to get into trouble and now I really have to apply the NA rule of person, places, and things. All I am trying to do is get a sentence that is fair to my part in things, also to show you that I am sorry and trying to start over in life a new! I would like to thank you Judge Phillips in your time in reading this, I know your decision is your decision an truly is in regard to my participation and to the amount of grams that I am being held accountable for. I cooperated fully with the prosecutor an law enforcement, I am not still ~~in~~

involved with any illegal action's as others are that are on this case and I properly told them about who is. I will more than likely make a final statement in court about everything, and hopefully I'll have a good outcome.

Sincerely,

Eric Deshaun Stripling

Jul 15
2011

ATTN: Honorable Judge Thomas W. Phillips
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